



## [VEDA hosts site selectors at Investment Advisor Forum in the V.I.](#)

Submitted by Semele George on Thu, 10/23/2014 - 10:27am

CHARLOTTE AMALIE, St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands - October 22, 2014 -- The V.I. Economic Development Authority (VEDA) welcomed 13 global tax advisors and site selection professionals to the U.S. Virgin Islands and recently hosted its first Investment Advisor Forum in the Territory.

This forum, held from October 16-19, 2014 on St. Thomas, provided these consultants with an opportunity to be exposed first-hand to the attributes that make the USVI a prime location for companies to relocate or expand which can lead to the creation jobs and further investment in the Territory. Site selectors, who are consultants hired by companies to explore multiple locations for business investment opportunities, play a key role in aiding corporate owners in their decisions to relocate or expand their business operations. This forum is one of the VIEDA's key marketing initiatives for promoting the business incentives and economic eco-system of the U.S. Virgin Islands.

"It is imperative for these consultants to personally engage with our community's business leaders and economic development partners. This interaction allows them to become more familiar with our people, infrastructure, business amenities and culture which set us apart from our competitors in this global marketplace," said Percival E. Clouden, VIEDA's chief executive officer.

On Thursday evening of October 16, the VIEDA held a barbeque at The Ritz-Carlton hotel on St. Thomas to welcome the site selectors to the Territory. On the morning of Friday, October 17, the VIEDA staff and other local government officials shared the advantages of doing business in the USVI during their presentations at the business forum. This forum was followed by a panel discussion with the presenters, a question and answer segment, and lunch. Executives from International Capital Management Corporation (ICMC), United Electronic Industries Services (UEIS), and Ocwen Financial Corporation - who are also participants of the Economic Development Commission program - shared their perspectives on why the USVI is the best place to live and do business.

On Friday afternoon, site selectors participated in an economic ecosystem tour on St. Thomas that showcased seaport facilities and logistics and industrial parks. On Friday evening, USVI Governor John P. de Jongh, Jr. hosted a dinner for the site selectors and other forum attendees at the Historic St. Peter Great House on St. Thomas where he shared remarks on his Administration's accomplishments and ongoing efforts to attract businesses to the Territory. William Neville, president of U.S. Viking, LLC, an EDC company, also shared his thoughts about the USVI as a place to live and do business.

On Saturday, some site selectors opted for a tour of the container port, industrial sites, and available commercial spaces on St. Croix while others remained on St. Thomas or visited St. John prior to farewell dinners hosted by the VIEDA on St. Thomas and St. Croix. These tours also included visits to local companies in diverse industries, the University of the Virgin Islands (St. Thomas and St. Croix campuses) and UVI's Research & Technology Park (RT Park) on St. Croix.

Presenters at the business forum included Percival E. Clouden; Albert Bryan, Jr., VIEDA's chairman of the board; Tamarah Parson-Small, Esq., chief counsel for the V.I. Bureau of Internal Revenue; and Larry Kupfer, president of the Virgin Islands Next Generation Network (viNGN). Jennifer Nugent-Hill, VIEDA's assistant chief executive officer and chief operating officer, served as the mistress of ceremonies at the business forum and the Governor's dinner and led the forum's panel discussion as its moderator.

According to the Site Selectors Guild, "advisory forums are one of the most effective ways a region or area can market itself to site selectors and enhance business attraction efforts." In a 2011 report by Development Counsellors International (DCI) titled, "A View from Corporate America: Winning Strategies in Economic Development Marketing", 78 percent of location advisors that were surveyed indicated that hosting special events is the most effective marketing technique to promote places.



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